

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO CREATE A MORE
SUSTAINABLE RECYCLING PROGRAM
PLEASE EMPTY, CLEAN AND DRY**

What we can recycle here in Elk Township is often dependent on foreign markets that purchase much of what is put out at the curb, not only in our county but throughout the country.

With this in mind, recent developments in China are affecting US recyclers that have historically marketed a large portion of their materials in China. One of the effects of the “China Sword”, a recent initiative of the Chinese government, is a tightening of the specifications for recycled paper entering that country.

In March of 2018 the allowable percentage of contaminants or non-recyclable materials in a bale of paper went from 3% to 0.5%, a level beyond most U.S. recycling facilities' capability to meet. This has resulted in whole loads of recycled paper being rejected, with few alternative markets available. As a result, some of this previously recyclable paper is now being stockpiled, awaiting markets to appear. Unfortunately, paper that is stored outdoors for long periods of time begins to degrade and so lose value, making it even harder to sell.

In order to create a more marketable product coming out of recycling facilities, Elk Township is asking residents to help by instituting some changes in what and how they prepare their items for recycling at the curb.

Most importantly, all containers placed in your curbside recycling should be empty of all contents, rinsed and drained of all water. Remnants of foods and liquid in bales of paper and cardboard are considered contaminants and will affect the marketability of that material.

Next, we ask all residents to refrain from “aspirational recycling”. That is, do not place items not identified as recyclable, in your curbside containers. This includes items such as plastic laundry baskets, plastic children's toys, garden hoses, mirrors, plate glass, ceramics, porcelain, light bulbs, batteries etc. Note that these items are not being recycled and are leaving the recycling facility as trash or causing contamination of otherwise marketable materials. Please place these items in your regular trash, NOT in your recycling container.

REMEMBER: WHEN IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT!!